

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 04286 140929Z

17

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

EB-07 /064 W

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R 130845Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6172

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SINGAPORE 4286

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SN

SUBJECT: TIMING OF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN SINGAPORE

REF: SINGAPORE 3482

1. STATEMENT IN ULTIMATE SENTENCE OF PARA 1 REFTTEL IS INCORRECT. THREE MONTHS IS MAXIMUM TIME THAT CAN PASS BETWEEN DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT AND ELECTIONS. THIS IS SPECIFIED IN SECTION 50 OF SINGAPORE CONSTITUTION WHICH STATES THAT ELECTION MUST OCCUR "WITHIN THREE MONTHS AFTER EVERY DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT".

2. ON OTHER HAND, ACCORDING TO PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ACT, MINIMUM PERIOD OF TIME BETWEEN DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT AND ELECTION IS 14 DAYS. IF DATE OF PUBLICATION OF "WRIT OF ELECTION" IS DAY "X", DATE OF NOMINATION IS "X" PLUS 5 (MINIMUM), AND DATE OF ELECTION IS "X" PLUS 5 PLUS 9 PLUS "X" PLUS 14 (MINIMUM) OR "X" PLUS 5 PLUS EIGHT WEEKS (MAXIMUM).

3. IF AS IN 1972 (DATE OF LAST GENERAL ELECTION) "WRIT OF ELECTION" IS ISSUED BY PRESIDENT CONCURRENTLY WITH THE "DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT" NOTICE, A MINIMUM OF FIVE DAYS MUST PASS PRIOR TO THE "DATE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 SINGAP 04286 140929Z

OF NOMINATION". INCUMBENT PARLIAMENTARIANS WITHOUT

OPPOSITION ARE AUTOMATICALLY RETURNED TO OFFICE
UPON CERTIFICATION OF "RETURNING OFFICER", WHEREAS
ELECTION TO DETERMINE VICTORS IN CONTESTED CON-
STITUENCIES MUST OCCUR NINE DAYS AFTER "DATE OF
NOMINATION".

4. SINCE PRESIDENT ACTS UPON ADVICE OF GOVERNMENT
BOTH IN DISSOLVING PARLIAMENT AND IN ISSUING WRIT
OF ELECTION, GOVERNMENT CAN OBVIOUSLY DETERMINE, WITHIN
LIMITS, LENGTH OF ELECTION CAMPAIGN. IN 1972 THE
PRESIDENT DISSOLVED PARLIAMENT ON AUGUST 16, AND CON-
CURRENTLY ISSUED HIS "WRIT OF ELECTION", DESIGNATING
AUGUST 23 AS NOMINATION DAY. ELECTION FOLLOWED
AUTOMATICALLY ON SEPTEMBER 2, AFTER PASSAGE OF NINE
DAYS.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH USUALLY WELL-INFORMED OBSERVERS STILL
BELIEVE THE ELECTION WILL BE HELD BEFORE THE END OF
THIS YEAR -- PROBABLY IN NOVEMBER -- WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK
THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAS NOT REACHED A FINAL DECISION
ON THE DATE. MEANWHILE, THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PAP ARE MAKING ALL
THE NECESSARY PREPARATIONS SO THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WILL HAVE
THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF OPTIONS AVAILABLE.
GRANT

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